(a) the details of places in the country where National Grape Research Centres are located;

(b) whether the Government propose to set up more such centres in the country; and

(c) if so, the details thereof, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI) : (a) The Indian Council of Agricultural Research has established a National Research Centre on Grapes at Manjri Farm in Pune district of Maharashtra State.

(b) and (c) There is no proposal at present to set up any more such centres in the country.

[English]

Procurement Price of Wheat, Rice and Sugar

3230. SHRI GORDHANBHAI JAVIA : Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the procurement price of wheat, rice and sugar during 1995-96 and 1996-97;

(b) whether there was an increase in the procurement price during the said period;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the procurement of wheat, rice and sugar was satisfactory during the said period; and

(e) if so, the details thereof, separately year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI RAGHUVANS PRASAD SINGH) : (a) The Minimum Support Prices of wheat for Rabi Marketing Season 1995-96 and 1996-97 were Rs. 360 per quintal and Rs. 380 per quintal respectively. The procurement price of levy rice varies from State to State.

The average All India price of levy sugar for 1995-96 is Rs. 876.75 per quintal and for 1996-97 the price is Rs. 1000.77 per quintal.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) It is the endeavour of the Government to increase procurement prices over the years keeping in view the interest of growers for increasing investment, production and productivity of agricultural commodities in the country.

(d) and (e) The quantity of wheat and rice procured for Central Pool during the years 1995-96 and 1996-97 is given below:—

(in lakh tonnes)

	1995-96	1996-97
Wheat (Rabi Marketing Season)	123.27	81.83
Rice (Kharif Marketing Season)	99.50	121.11 (upto 4.8.97)

Procurement of wheat in 1996-97 Rabi Marketing Season and procurement of rice in the 1995-96 Kharif Marketing Season was not upto the expected level.

Production of sugar during 1995-96 is estimated at 164.29 lakh tons, and for 1996-97 sugar season the estimate production is 130 lakh tons (the sugar season begins from 1st October every year and ends on 30th September of the subsequent year). The Government procures a certain percentage of production as levy from all sugar factories, unless exempted under incentive schemes. Presently, this percentage of levy is 40%.

Conference in Jaipur

3232. SHRI DILEEP SANGHANI : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Chief Ministers of Rajasthan, Punjab, Maharashtra, Delhi and Haryana held a conference at Jaipur in June, 1997;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) to (c) The Chief Ministers of Delhi, Haryana, Maharashtra, Punjab and Rajasthan met on 25.6.1997 at Jaipur, to discuss issues relating to Centre-State relations including article 356 of the Constitution of India, internal security, economic reforms at the State level, poverty alleviation, infrastructure development, innovations in public systems and delegation of powers for clearance of power, water and mineral based projects, environmental clearances, etc.

In so far as issues relating to Centre-State relations are concerned, the Government has not only taken action on a few issues arising out of the recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission but is also keen to finalise action on other recommendations.